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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the effectiveness of a program for improving the recreational reading habits of fifth-grade students and encouraging them to become lifelong readers. The targeted population lived in a growing, low- to upper-middle-class, suburban community, located in Hanover Park, approximately 35 miles west of Chicago, Illinois. Students in recent years were found to be reading less, based on personal observation, anecdotal records, and surveys. Analysis of the probable cause data, as well as the professional literature, revealed that several possible causes existed for the lack of time students spent in independent, or leisure, reading. Children were being attracted regularly by modern technology and media, they were involved in outside interests and activities, contended with distractions from home and society, and frequently had no one with whom to share books or stories. The solution strategies consisted of implementing motivational reading programs, having an author visit, having author studies, exposing students to a wide variety of literature by reading to them regularly, using book talks, and sharing their writing. Data included teacher records, student interviews, student records, and parent and student surveys. Results indicated that: (1) students significantly increased the amount of recreational reading they engaged in; and (2) students and parents both felt that the children were reading more. Recommendations include teachers reading to students 15-20 minutes daily; involve students in deciding what the incentives in motivational reading programs will be; and encouraging students to share what they have read frequently. (Contains 89 references and 7 tables. Appendixes present numerous survey instruments and descriptions of motivational reading programs.) (Author/RS)

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ED 386 691

IMPROVING STUDENT INTEREST IN RECREATIONAL READING

by

Ronald Lange

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts in teaching and leadership

St. Xavier University & IRI/Skylight
Field-Based Master's Program

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Action Research Report
Site: St. Charles
Submitted: April 1994

Ronald Lange
Horizon Elementary
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This project was approved by

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DEDICATION

To my father, Robert Lange, and my sister, Gloria Jean, whose lives were an inspiration.

To my mother, Gloria, who constantly gave and sacrificed for her family.

R.L.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My heartfelt thanks to my wife, Kathie, for the hours she spent on the word processor and reading over this manuscript, offering her suggestions and praise.

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Abstract

AUTHOR: Ron Lange SITE: St. Charles
DATE: July 30, 1994

TITLE: Improving Student Interest in Recreational Reading

ABSTRACT: This report describes a program for improving recreational reading with an effort to encourage fifth grade students to become lifelong readers. The targeted population lived in a growing, low to upper middle class, suburban community, located in northern Illinois approximately thirty-five miles west of Chicago. The problem was noted by the author who found that in recent years students were reading less. The problem was also documented through data gathered from surveys and anecdotal records.

Analysis of the probable cause data, as well as the professional literature, revealed that several possible causes existed for the lack of time students spent in independent, or leisure, reading. Children were being attracted regularly by modern technology and media. In addition, they were involved in outside interests and activities, contended with distractions from home and society, and frequently had no one with whom to share books or stories. Thus, reading was a low priority for many students.

The solution strategies consisted of implementing motivational reading programs, having an author visit, having author studies, exposing students to a wide variety of literature by reading to them regularly, and through the use of book talks and sharing their writing.

Chapter 1

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND COMMUNITY BACKGROUND

General Statement of Problem

Fifth grade students at Horizon Elementary School spend little time doing recreational reading as evidenced by surveys of students, teacher observations, teacher and student records, and survey of parents.

Local Context of Problem

Horizon Elementary School is one of 34 elementary schools in the Elgin U-46 School District. The school is located in the eastern area of the district at 1701 Greenbrook Boulevard in the village of Hanover Park, and serves primarily the villages of Hanover Park and Bartlett. The Horizon School Improvement Plan 1994-1995 (Horizon School, 1994a, p. 4) gives a student enrollment of 561. There are 19 classrooms of students from kindergarten through sixth grade. Thus, the average class size is 28.1 students (M. DeMoulin, personal communication, August 23, 1994).

According to the Horizon School 1994 School Report Card (Horizon School, 1994b, p. 2), 81.2 percent of the student population is White, 5.9 percent Black, 3.2 percent Hispanic, and 9.6 percent Asian or Pacific Islanders. Eight and three-tenths percent of the students comes from low income families, while 2.9 percent speaks limited

English, making them eligible for bilingual education. School attendance is outstanding at 96.8 percent. There is no truancy problem at the school. Student mobility is approximately 16.6 percent.

The teaching staff at Horizon Elementary consists of 19 regular classroom teachers. In addition, there is a challenge mathematics teacher for gifted students in grades four through six, teachers for art, music, and physical education for one semester each, speech, and learning disabilities. The school staff also includes a nurse, social worker, psychologist, part-time librarian, clerical aid, secretary, and two custodians (M. DeMoulin, personal communication, August 23, 1994).

In addition, M. DeMoulin verified that the regular classroom teachers are comprised of 17 women and 2 men. When the other teachers are also included, the staff has 22 women and 3 men, all of whom are White. Average experience of the staff is slightly over 16.3 years, close to the district average of 16.1 years (Horizon School, 1994b, p. 3).

Administratively, Horizon is being lead by a principal, Mark DeMoulin, who reports to the area superintendent of the southern half of the district (School District U-46, 1994c).

In the area of curriculum, as represented by the sixth grade, 50 minutes is devoted to mathematics, 40 minutes to science, 45 minutes to social studies, and 150 minutes to language arts on a daily basis (Horizon School 1994b, p.3).

The school has a very active Parent Teacher Organization. It conducts many fund raisers throughout the year to purchase materials such as computers which will benefit the students. The PTO Board consists of parent volunteers, teacher representatives, and the principal.

Activities which take place within the school include band, orchestra, chorus, safety patrol, Battle of the Books reading program, after school recreation, and the PTO sponsored after-school academy, offering many different classes for one hour on Mondays for six weeks.

The classroom in which the research will be conducted utilizes direct instruction and cooperative grouping. Numerous graphic organizers are used and will be effective tools while working to increase the interest level of students in recreational reading.

Community Context of Problem

Elgin School District U-46, of which Horizon Elementary is a part, is the second largest school district in Illinois. The 90 square miles within U-46 boundaries includes the communities of Bartlett, Elgin, Hanover Park (west of Barrington Road) , South Elgin, Streamwood, and Wayne, as well as parts of Carol Stream, St. Charles, Schaumburg, and West Chicago. In addition, the district boundary overlaps three counties: Cook, Dupage, and Kane (School District U-46, 1994a, p. 8) .

The administrative structure of U-46 begins with a seven member school board.

These individuals are elected for a four year term and are held responsible for a) approving courses of study and textbooks to be used, b) adopting a budget annually for the following fiscal year which runs from July 1 through June 30, c) hiring of all district employees, and d) construction, furnishing, and maintaining facilities (School District U-46, 1994a, p.3). Since school board members do not work in the district, the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Marvin Edwards, is responsible for the daily operations of the district. To enhance efficiency and communication, School District U-46 has been organized into two geographic areas: North and South. Each of these areas consists of one or two high schools, three middle schools and 17 elementary schools (School District U-46, 1994c). An Area Superintendent administers each section and is responsible for the planning, operation, and implementation of programs within that area. Thus, the Area Superintendents supervise principals and other building administrators. They report to the Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Marvin Edwards.

According to School District U-46 (1994a, pp. 4-6) there are nine individuals on the Superintendent's staff, nine Central Office staff, nine Curriculum/Instruction Coordinators and Directors, and 10 Special Education Supervisors within the central office administration.

School District U-46 presently operates 43 schools, including 34 elementary (K-6), six middle schools (7-8), and three high schools (9-12). Additional facilities include a district-owned, student operated educational radio station (WEPS), the district-owned

and operated Planetarium/Observatory, Central School (Adult and Alternative Education), and an Administrative Office at 355 East Chicago Street in Elgin (School District U-46, 1994c).

More than 3,000 full-time and part-time personnel are employed by the district (School District U-46, 1994c). Of this number 1,572 are teachers and 117 are administrators. Teachers in the U-46 district average 16.1 years of experience. Approximately 58 percent have a master's degree and above in educational background. Women comprise 75.1 percent of the district's teachers, men 24.9 percent. Racially and ethnically, close to 91 percent of the district teachers are Caucasian, 3 percent Black, 5 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent Asian/Pacific Islander (Horizon School, 1994b, p. 3).

Student enrollment has been increasing rapidly over the past decade, quite the opposite from many districts. From 1991-92 to 1992-93, School District U-46 grew by 380 students. In 1993-94, the growth was 842 students to an enrollment of 30,401 (School District U-46, 1994d, p. 2). The 1994-95 school year has seen a growth of 725 students, with enrollment reaching 31,126. A total of 18,567 children are in elementary school, 4,393 in middle school, and 8,166 in high school (School District U-46, 1994c). The composition of the student enrollment includes 65.9 percent Caucasian, 20.4 percent Hispanic, 8 percent Black, and 6 percent Asian. In addition, 60 different native languages can be found among U-46 students. School District U-46 (Horizon School, 1994b, p. 2) also reports that approximately 24 percent of the pupils come from low-

income families, while 16.5 percent are limited English proficient and eligible for bilingual education. Attendance at U-46 schools averages 95.3 percent, with student mobility at 22.3 percent.

Elgin School District U-46 is presently working to recover from a severe budget crisis. With rapid population growth in the communities which comprise the district, it would seem U-46 would have been doing well financially. However, the opposite has been true. The most recent figures available are for the 1992-1993 school year and show that the operating expense per student was $5,365 (School District U-46, 1994c), over $200 below the state average. Since the property tax cap went into effect, the district receives $2,078 in taxes for each additional home constructed with an average market value of $150,000 (G. Schultz, personal communication, February 23, 1994). According to Schultz, the amount of state aid plummeted from $34.8 million (52.6 percent of the budget) in 1990-1991 to $29.4 million (37.6 percent of the budget) in 1993-1994 (School District U-46, 1994d, p. 2). Thus, the district found itself over $26 million in debt, $8.8 million from the 1993-1994 school year budget of $139.3 million. The U-46 Board of Education placed a two part tax referendum before the voters in March 1994 to produce added revenue to reduce the debt, build new schools, and hire additional staff. When one part of the referendum appeared to fail, the Board of Education began making massive budget cuts totaling $12.5 million for the 1994-1995 school year (School District U-46, 1994b, pp. 1-8). Since then, a court decision has reversed the result of the

failed referendum. Thus, the Board of Education is restoring approximately $8 million of the eliminated items to the budget for the 1995-1996 school year (School District U-46, 1995, pp. 1-6). However, the U-46 district remains deeply in debt.

The city of Elgin does not support the school district adequately either. Its economic base declined to a large degree in the 1970's. Simultaneously, there was an influx of various cultural and ethnic groups -- Blacks, Hispanic, Laotian, Vietnamese. As reflected previously in the statistic that 24 percent (Horizon School, 1994b, p. 2) of U-46's students come from low income families, socio-economic factors do impact the district and its schools. Although a riverboat casino has recently opened, there is no guarantee that the school district will benefit in any way.

The village of Bartlett has been growing rapidly. In 1988, the population was 16,792. By 1993, this had increased to 26,979 (Village of Bartlett, 1995, p. 3). The racial/ethnic composition is White 92 percent, Asian-Pacific Islander 5.3 percent, Black 2 percent, and Other 0.7 percent (people of Hispanic origin have not been identified separately). The median age in Bartlett is 30.8 years. According to Living in Greater Chicago (1994, p. 148), the estimated average household income is $67,506, the average resale price of a home is $165,430, and the median price of a single family home (1992 estimate) is $183,900 (Living in Greater Chicago, 1993, p. 160).

The village of Hanover Park had a population of 35,579 according to a special 1994 census (M. Masciola, personal communication, March 29, 1995). Masciola

reported that when the population is divided along racial/ethnic lines, there is 84 percent White, 9.3 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 4.7 percent Black, 0.3 percent American Indian/Eskimo, and 1.6 percent Other (people of Hispanic origin make up 15.4 percent of the population, but are included in the other categories). According to Living in Greater Chicago (1994, p. 148), the median age in Hanover Park is 28 years. The estimated average household income is $57,984, and the average resale price of a home is $126,718.

Regional/National Context of Problem

The problem of fifth grade students -- actually, children of all ages -- not showing interest or spending time in recreational reading and becoming lifelong readers has been identified as a nationwide problem and concern. In two comprehensive studies of 158 capable fifth grade students and how after school time was spent, "Ninety percent devoted one percent of their free time to reading books compared to 30 percent watching television. In addition, 50 percent of the students read for an average of four minutes or less a day, 30 percent read two minutes a day, and 10 percent read nothing at all" (Anderson, Fielding, & Wilson, 1988, p. 292). Such findings as those reported above provide some evidence that the educational field must continue to not only examine this area, but give emphasis and leadership to prevent such a vital skill from eroding to the degree that we would not have a functionally literate society.

According to Trelease (1989b, p. 7), "American children and young adults (who will be tomorrow's parents, teachers, electorate, and consumers) do minimal reading. They don't know very much about yesterday and today unless they've seen it on television. This is not called illiteracy; it is called ignorance and it is showing throughout the culture. For example, the federal government spends $100 million annually and state governments another $200 million in assisting illiterate adults. In addition, 30 percent of the nation's largest companies are collectively paying $25 billion a year teaching remedial reading and math to entry-level employees. Furthermore, 44 percent of U.S. adults do not read a book in the course of a year -- with young adults showing the largest decline, leaving 10 percent of the population to read 80 percent of the books. Finally, half of the population no longer reads a daily newspaper, but depends upon television for daily information."

While watching television is convenient and requires little effort or thinking, reading does require effort, thinking, and using one's capabilities. However, we must instill the love and joy of reading in all our children early. Sanacore (1992b) says research findings show that "reading for pleasure is significantly linked to the amount of leisure time engaged in reading, which is linked to reading achievement" (p. 51). Furthermore, Sanacore (p. 50) says, "we must accept the challenge of encouraging the lifetime reading habit in school. Independent reading is an important step toward enhancing literacy for students and society."

Chapter 2

PROBLEM EVIDENCE AND PROBABLE CAUSE

Problem Evidence

The targeted group of fifth grade students spend little time in recreational reading. To document this fact, anecdotal records of the teacher and students were noted, as well as teacher observations and surveys given to students and parents.

There were 27 students, 14 boys and 13 girls, involved in this project. Surveys for the students (Appendix A) and their parents (Appendices B & C) were developed by the researcher to help gather information on the students reading habits. Responses to the surveys were returned within three days of their distribution, with all 27 students and 27 parents returning the surveys. The results of the student responses have been summarized in Table 1, and parent responses have been summarized in Table 2. The results on both tables are shown in percents.

Table 1

Student Reading Survey

September 1994

(n=27)

	%
Enjoyment of recreational reading	
a. Not at all	4
b. Some	26
c. Quite a bit	37
d. Greatly	33
Time spent reading at home daily	
a. None	8
b. 5-10 minutes	15
c. 10-20 minutes	22
d. 20-30 minutes	26
e. More than 30 minutes	29
Like parents to read to you	
a. Yes	53
b. No	47
Parents read to child	
a. Not at all	33
b. Once in a while	63
c. Frequently	4
Like having time to read at school	
a. Not at all	0
b. Some	22
c. Quite a bit	40
d. Very much	37
Like teacher to read to class	
a. Not at all	0
b. Some	44
c. Quite a bit	18
d. Greatly	38
Frequency of library visit	
a. Seldom	8
b. Occasional	44
c. Weekly	40
d. Research only	8
Working parents	
a. Father only	14
b. Mother only	4
c. Both parents	78
Choice of activities	
a. Read / Watch TV	47 / 53
b. Read / Use computer	44 / 56
c. Read / Play sports	29 / 71
d. Read / Play video games	74 / 26

Time spent on various activities (1 being highest)	1	2	3	4	5	6
a. Sports	37	22	0	4	19	8
b. TV	30	19	15	11	18	7
c. Reading	22	15	33	11	11	7
d. Computer	7	22	7	15	15	30

According to the data in the student survey, 30 percent of the 27 students had some or no interest in recreational reading. In addition, while listening to parents or a teacher read might expose them to books of high interest, 47 percent of the students did not like parents to read to them and 44 percent only like their teacher reading to the class "some". Further evidence of the problem is seen by the data that 8 percent of the students seldom visit the library with 44 percent going occasionally, and another 8 percent going for research only. This may be directly related to the fact that 78 percent of the children have both parents working (Table 1).

Analysis of how students spend their time reveals that reading ranks behind watching television and playing sports for 67 percent of these fifth grade students. Furthermore, if given a choice of activities, the children would also choose using a computer rather than read.

The little time the targeted group of fifth grade students spend on recreational reading is also seen in the parent survey. Data shows that 44 percent of these students spend twenty minutes or less reading at home daily, with 11 percent of the class doing no reading at all. Statistics reveal that 52 percent of the group read three hours or less weekly, and 11 percent read less than one hour. In addition, parents confirmed that their children are spending more time watching television than reading. According to Table 2, 26 percent of the students watch up to one hour of television daily, while 59 percent watch between one and three hours, with 8 percent watching more than three hours daily.

Table 2

Parent Survey

September 1994

(n=27)

	%
Read to your child	
a. Yes	44
b. No	56
How often is the child read to	
a. Less than once a week	60
b. Once a week	18
c. 2-3 times weekly	11
d. Daily	11
Length of time spent reading to child	
a. None	56
b. 5-10 minutes	4
c. 10-20 minutes	22
d. More than 20 minutes	18
Child has library card	
a. Yes	82
b. No	18
Child reads at home daily	
a. None	11
b. 5-10 minutes	18
c. 10-20 minutes	15
d. 20-30 minutes	22
e. more than 30 minutes	33
Child reads at home weekly	
a. None	11
b. 1 hour	15
c. 2-3 hours	26
d. 4-5 hours	37
e. more than 5 hours	11
Child watches TV daily	
a. None	0
b. 0-1 hour	26
c. 1-3 hours	59
d. more than 3 hours	8
Reading/reference items found in home	
a. Daily newspaper	71
b. Weekly magazine	47
c. Dictionary	100
d. Encyclopedia	71
e. Thesaurus	67
f. Almanac	37
g. Atlas	85

Activities child spends most time on (1 means most frequent)	1	2	3	4	5
a. TV	59	19	4	4	4
b. Reading	26	19	22	11	11
c. Watching movies/videos	4	26	19	30	7
d. Video games	0	15	33	11	26
e. Computer	4	7	7	30	52

Probable Cause

In "Encouraging the lifetime reading habit," Sanacore (1992a, pp. 474-475) states: "Independent reading, which is one way of supporting lifetime literacy, is not a frill." It has also been determined by Greaney (1980) and Greaney and Hegarty (1987) that reading for pleasure is significantly linked to the amount of leisure time engaged in reading, which in turn is linked to reading achievement.

The question of why fifth grade students spend such relatively little time doing independent, or recreational, reading requires analyzing numerous factors. First, whether students have one or two parents in the home, it is likely that they are employed outside the home. Therefore, the student may have less sharing of and exposure to books, and less access to a public library. Second, these parents may not read to their children or take time to share stories due to time constraints at the end of a busy day. In the present study, 33 percent of the fifth graders are not read to at all, while 63 percent are read to once in a while (Table 1). For other students, reading is not a priority in the home, resulting from their parents' educational background, or the parents having other involvements. Third, many fifth grade students are involved in numerous activities outside of school which prevent them from reading. Finally, there is the impact of technology and the electronic media on the students' lives. These boys and girls are influenced daily by modern technology, in the form of video games, computers, television, VCR's and movies, CD players and laser discs, and the telephone.

Thus, reading has an abundance of competitors vying for the attention of fifth grade students.

The professional literature agrees that working parents are a probable cause for the lack of recreational reading. "Demographic trends indicate many of our students are living in homes with two working parents or a single parent who must work. Thus, a number of our students enter homes each afternoon with little or no adult supervision. At the least, they probably become involved in too much television viewing, too much telephone conversation, and other activities that displace reading for pleasure" (Sanacore, 1992a, p. 475). In addition, Trelease (1986) believes that television and parents' disinterest in books discourages the beginning readers desire to read the book he brought home from school or the library. Trelease (as cited in Greene, 1992, pp. 28-29) reported that "three year olds watch as much television as the nation's ten year olds - thirty hours a week." As for teens, "59 per cent own their own television sets and 33 per cent of those own a VCR" (Trelease, 1989b, p. 6). These facts and ideas focus on some of the major distractions in homes today.

According to Morrow (1986b), one reason for the low level of voluntary reading by children is the attraction of electronic entertainment. In two studies conducted by The Book Industry Study Group (BISG) in 1976 and 1984, the number of readers under 21 dropped 12% during those eight years. In addition, Morrow's research found that teachers, parents, and principals considered development of voluntary reading an

important area, but did not see great educational value in it.

The professional literature also suggests several underlying causes for the lack of time spent in recreational reading. "One explanation for the low level of voluntary reading may be that developmental reading programs are often skills-oriented and provide little opportunity for students to read for enjoyment" (Morrow, 1983, p. 221).

A second reason may also come from the classroom, where "too many of our children too quickly come to associate books and reading with ditto sheets, workbooks, tests, and homework. 'Reading? That's work, not fun,' they will tell you" (Trelease, 1986, p. 8).

Socioeconomic status also plays a role in the amount of recreational reading a fifth grade student does. Research conducted by Neuman (1986) showed the number of books read, the time spent reading, and family discussions of books and magazines were significantly and positively correlated with higher status. There was also found to be a strong relationship between leisure reading and parental encouragement of reading. Additional factors in how much reading these fifth graders did included the frequency of being read to as a child and the availability of printed materials, such as daily newspapers and magazines, that could easily be picked up and put down.

Furthermore, the literature discusses those students who are capable but choose not to read. In the case of the good student who enters the preteens not reading, the explanation can be quite simple. "Restlessness often prevents this child from having the

disposition necessary to concentrate and enter into the world of books" (Dupart, 1985, p. 501). Instead, these students take things easily, dream, or perhaps just avoid scholarly things.

Finally, Neuman (1986, p. 335) states: "Educators are currently confronted with a new phenomenon, 'aliteracy.' Aliterate persons know how to read but choose not to."

If one believes it is important for children to read independently for leisure, "then the reports that considerable numbers of children do not choose to read are cause for concern, and the need to promote voluntary reading becomes apparent" (Morrow, 1986b, p. 344). According to Boorstin, Librarian of Congress (as cited in Morrow, 1986b, p. 344), "aliterates constitute as much of a threat to a democratic tradition built on books and reading as illiterates."

In conclusion, the local context and the professional literature have supplied numerous probable causes for the problem why fifth grade students spend such little time doing recreational reading. These probable causes include:

1) working parents, who have little time to read to their children, which would develop interest in reading
2) limited access to a public library
3) reading not a priority at home
4) student involvement in other activities

5) the influence of modern technology and the media - television, video games, computers, etc.

6) skill oriented reading programs

7) feeling by students that reading is work, not fun

8) socioeconomic status of parents

9) the availability of printed materials in the home

10) the "aliterate" student

Chapter 3

THE SOLUTION STRATEGY

Review of the Literature

Since many of our school children do return home from school with little or no adult supervision and therefore watch much television, the problem becomes more difficult to solve. However, one approach is to encourage reading time at school. Providing this time would be an important step toward enhancing literacy as well and sending a message to the students that lifetime literacy is a major instructional activity (Sanacore, 1992a).

While educators must encourage students to read at school, they also need to convince parents how important reading is. Parents must understand the impact and influence they have by reading aloud and sharing stories with their children. In the process of reading stories to or with them, parents are actively participating with their children. Thus, it is an effective way of linking reading to pleasure and an important way to spend time together (Dupart, 1985). In addition, reading aloud can be fun for the reader and listener. Furthermore, according to Trelease (as cited in Greene, 1992), there are many educational benefits for the child, including the improvement of reading and listening skills and developing a positive attitude toward reading. Finally, it encourages use of the imagination and increases vocabulary. Therefore, reading's

pleasures and importance need to be sold and advertised. As described by Greene (1992, p. 29), "Parents must read over and over, week after week. This encourages the child to read on his own. In this way, we advertise that reading is important to us." There appears to be a definite correlation between the frequency of being read to and the amount of leisure reading a child does (Neuman, 1986).

Parents can be instrumental in getting their children to read recreationally in other ways as well. Certainly, modeling behavior frequently is more important and effective than coaxing or telling. Children generally want to follow parents example; thus, it becomes vital for the parent to be a reader. Demos (as cited in Wepner and Caccavale, 1991), summarized that parents' reading behaviors impact on children's attitudes toward reading. When parents frequently read "just for the fun of it," children view reading as a valued recreational home activity. Greene (1992, p. 28) concurs, stating that "boys and girls understand reading is valuable and highly valued when they see parents sitting down to read on a regular basis." Thus, parents can further develop a positive attitude toward reading by giving books a prominent place in their lives in addition to their children's. In addition, Neuman (1986) found that parental encouragement of reading correlated most highly with recreational reading of six home processes studied. The active involvement of children in hobbies, family and individual activities, and trips and outings also positively correlated with recreational reading. Also, the degree of success and interest that students have in reading is sometimes

dependent upon parents' interest in what the children are reading (Wepner & Caccavale, 1991).

Finally, parents can help encourage more recreational reading by their children and lessen the impact of technology and the media on their children's lives. This can be done if reading is a priority and the parents are committed and involved in the reading act. Not only must the parents be readers, they need to read to, and with, their child. Then, Zakariya (1985, p. 21) suggests these basic ideas:

1) familiarize the child with the library and use it often
2) the child should own books; thus, he/she will desire to own more
3) it is vital that the child has plenty of reading material on hand, including newspapers and magazines
4) make reading convenient and enticing
5) play games that involve reading such as Scrabble, Boggle, and Spill and Spell
6) turn television to your advantage by limiting the number of hours and what programs are watched
7) use the interrelationship of reading and writing to have the child write stories, poems, and do other writing activities

Teachers and schools can also play a vital role in the effort to increase recreational reading by fifth grade students. According to Irving (as cited in Morrow,

1986a, p. 128), "The role of teachers in stimulating voluntary reading among children is potentially the most powerful of all adult influences among the young." Thus, Morrow believes that those activities that promote recreational reading must be initiated by teachers with the support of principals and parents. Just as parents serve as models and a source of encouragement, the same is true of teachers. Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) is an uninterrupted period of time in which all students sit quietly and read something of interest. However, not only are the students reading silently, but an important aspect of SSR is the teacher serving as a reading model while students are reading silently (Sanacore, 1988).

Hillerich (as cited in Sanacore, 1988) believes that even the best teachers of reading are wasting their time teaching children how to read if they are not helping them want to read and actually getting them to read.

Trelease (1989a, pp. 202, 205) states:

> Since modeled behavior is crucial to learning, the more often a parent or teacher is seen or heard reading for pleasure and in a meaningful way, the greater the chances of the listener modeling the behavior.
>
> Reading is an accrued skill: the more you do it, the better you get at it; the better you get at it, the more you like it; and the more you like it, the more you do it.
>
> It is time to stop fooling ourselves. Teaching children how to read is not enough;

we must also teach them to want to read. We have produced a nation of schooltime readers where the objective should be lifetime readers.

Teachers may also be very effective in encouraging recreational reading for their students by reading aloud to their class. Trelease (1989a) describes reading aloud as the most effective advertisement for the pleasures of reading. When teachers read aloud to their students, the children are getting continuous exposure to a wide variety of books, new and unique experiences, extensive vocabulary, new information and knowledge, a good reading role model, and the pleasures of reading. Thus, the opportunity to turn children on to reading exists.

Beyond reading aloud to students, teachers may try other ideas and techniques to encourage more recreational reading. In some classrooms, booktalks have proven to be effective, while Trelease reports that peer learning, in which fifth graders read to first and second graders, has aroused interest in reading by all involved students. In addition, guest reader programs provide enjoyment and the element of anticipation on the part of students when different guests - the principal, the school nurse, a parent, policeman, grandparent, or another teacher - come to the class to read or share stories.

Behavior modification programs, as described by Burgess (1985), involve rewarding students with prizes if they reach a desired outcome or goal in reading recreationally at home. Within such a program, students reap the benefits by gaining knowledge and enjoyment, while also discovering certain authors whose books become

favorites. Burgess reported that this program really turned her students on to reading.

While there are individuals who are opposed to giving rewards to students to read, Wiesendanger and Bader (1989) reported on classroom techniques which students responded to via survey. The survey, divided into prereading, postreading, and rewards, indicated that it was important to offer students choices and present alternatives to them in reading activities. By having choices and determining what types of rewards students would choose, motivation for students to read could conceivably increase. This, in turn, might reduce the amount of time spent watching television and being attracted to other electronic entertainments.

Dupart (1985) cautions teachers not to transform reading for pleasure into an extension of schoolwork. Since voluntary reading is critical to a literate society, Sanacore (1992a) suggests that teachers and educators need to surround students with books, newspapers, magazines, and other materials to browse and read. As much as possible, let the students select their own material for recreational reading.

Project Objective

As a result of participation in motivational reading programs and reading-related activities, during the period of September 1994 through February 1995, the targeted fifth grade students of Horizon Elementary School will increase their recreational reading, as evidenced by teacher observation and records, interviews, student reading folders and surveys, and parent surveys.

Solution Components

In order to accomplish the terminal objective, the following strategic procedures are proposed:

1. the teacher will expose students to a variety of literature by reading books and excerpts from many authors aloud.
2. the use of recreational and motivational reading programs will enable students to choose books of interest, while earning incentive awards.
3. visitors to the school and class will read to the students, share favorite stories, and discuss the importance of reading.
4. an author study each month will acquaint students with different authors and their works, arousing interest in reading.
5. students will be involved in book presentations with classmates.
6. students will read with younger children and share the joy of reading.
7. through letter writing activities, students will evaluate the importance of reading and how authors get their ideas.
8. students will write in response to reading, as well as write original pieces of creative writing.
9. students will read novels to acquaint them to different styles, authors, and types of literature.

Action Plan

In the first week of September, the targeted students will fill out a survey on their reading habits. At the same time, parents will also complete a survey on the topic of reading and their child's reading habits. As these surveys' results are being tabulated and studied, the researcher will initiate an action plan to attempt to increase the amount of recreational reading done by these fifth graders.

The classroom instructor will begin exposing the students to a variety of literature by reading The Island of the Blue Dolphins by Scott O'Dell (1960) to the class beginning the first week of September. Approximately every three weeks, a different children's book will be read to the class. Following the selection by O'Dell, these novels shall by read:

October	The Dollhouse Murders by Betty Ren Wright (1983)
November	The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth Speare (1958)
December	The Best Christmas Pageant Ever by Barbara Robinson (1972)
January	My Brother Sam is Dead by Robert Collier (1974)
February	The Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks (1980)

The books chosen for read aloud will appeal to a variety of students and their feelings. The stories evoke laughter, tears, thought, and sharing of ideas and opinions, all intended to capture interest in reading. After each book is completed, students will be asked to evaluate the book to determine the level of interest students had and

whether they would like to read/hear other selections by that author.

While entire novels are read, selected excerpts from other books shall also be presented. Simultaneously, certain writers will be featured as "Authors of the Month." Through these strategies, the researcher will attempt to capture interest in reading by exposing the students to a greater variety of authors and writing.

For example, while the aforementioned Island of the Blue Dolphins by O'Dell (1960) is featured as a read aloud in September, Author of the Month Judy Blume (1990, 1993) will be represented by Fudge-A-Mania. Students will learn more about her by listening to the cassette Authors on Tape. In addition, an excerpt from The War With Grandpa by Robert Kimmel Smith (1984) will be read, as will an excerpt from Lois Lowry's (1988) All About Sam. During the month, a collection of books by the Author of the Month will be on display and available for checkout. In addition, Leona Rusch, children's librarian at Bartlett Public Library, will be a guest reader.

October will highlight Betty Ren Wright and Jack Prelutsky as the selected authors. Wright's (1983, 1993) The Dollhouse Murders will provide suspense as a read aloud and students will hear from her on the cassette Authors on Tape. Selected poems from Prelutsky's (1984) The New Kid on the Block will be read by the instructor and the students will hear taped readings by the author. Poems will also be read from Something Big Has Been Here by Prelutsky (1990). As a prelude to Halloween, Alvin Schwartz' (1981, 1984) Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark and More Scary Stories to Tell

in the Dark will be excerpted. Special read-aloud visitors to the class during the month will be Mark DeMoulin, principal of Horizon School, and Amy Donato, children's librarian at Bartlett Public Library.

While the fifth grade students are studying the American colonies in November, The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Elizabeth Speare (1958) will be read to the class. The Author of the Month, Patricia Reilly Giff, will make an appearance at the school and be a guest reader. Excerpts from Mrs. Giff's (1981, 1986,) books, such as The Winter Worm Business and Love, From the Fifth-Grade Celebrity shall be highlighted. Her appearance, arranged by the researcher, will hopefully arouse new interest in recreational reading.

As the students may find the upcoming holidays to be a major distraction in December, the featured authors, Steven Kellogg and Johanna Hurwitz, will provide light and entertaining reading. From Kellogg's (1992, 1986) vast collection, students will listen to The Christmas Witch, Pecos Bill, and The Day Jimmy's Boa Ate the Wash, illustrated by Kellogg, but written by Trina Nobel (1980). These picture books are intended to remind students that these books do make reading fun! In addition, Mr. Kellogg will become more familiar to the students with the viewing of Trumpet Video Visits Stephen Kellogg. Meanwhile, excerpts from Mrs. Hurwitz' (1979, 1987) Aldo Applesauce and Class Clown will give students some characters to laugh at also, thus further reinforcing the idea that reading is fun!

The targeted fifth graders will be learning about the American Revolution in January. Thus, My Brother Sam is Dead by Robert Collier (1974) is the read aloud novel. At the same time, the students will read novels dealing with this period of history to spur interest in reading about the formation and development of the United States. The Author of the Month, Jean Fritz (1974, 1975, 1977), has gained fame for her writings on historical personalities. Thus, excerpts from her books Why Don't You Get a Horse Sam Adams, Where Was Patrick Henry on the 29th of May, and Can't You Make Them Behave, King George will be read.

Throughout February, the Indian in the Cupboard series will be featured. The instructor shall read the first novel of the series, The Indian in the Cupboard, by Lynne Reid Banks (1980, 1989). Students will get better acquainted with Mrs. Banks by listening to the cassette Authors on Tape.

February also will put emphasis on non-fiction books. Since February is Black History Month and American History Month, biographies of famous Americans will be displayed prominently. It is also the month when we celebrate the birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. The visitor of the month will be James Getty, from Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, who does portrayals of Lincoln. Thus, information about Lincoln shall be read to the class and made available to the students.

From September through February, the targeted fifth grade students will be involved in other activities designed to encourage recreational reading. First, the

students will be involved with three motivational reading programs. The Accelerated Reader Program (Advantage Learning Systems, 1992) is a computerized reading program in which the boys and girls earn points for books read by taking a test on the computer. The number of points is determined by two criteria: the reading level and the length of the book. The Four in a Row (Appendix D) is an incentive program. Students will attempt to complete a four in a row on a four by four grid by reading books by different authors in any given row. For each four in a row completed students earn an award which the class members will have decided upon. This program will be offered during September-October, and then again from November through January. The third reading incentive program is The Pizza Hut Book-It program (Appendix E), in which students set a goal of a certain number of books and/or pages to be read each month. Upon completion, the successful student earns a free individual pizza from Pizza Hut. This program runs from October through February.

The second area of activity for the students will be letter writing. In November, the students shall write to their favorite authors, asking questions about writing and the author's personal background. Next, letters will be written to authors Jamie Gilson, who will be visiting school in April of 1995, and author-illustrator Steven Kellogg, who will be visiting in October 1995.

A third area the targeted students will engage in is reading to and with primary grade boys and girls. During November and December, each fifth grader shall meet

with a first grader every Friday for 20-25 minutes to read picture books to the first graders. Thus, the fifth graders will be sharing the joy of reading with the younger students.

Finally, the targeted students shall be further exposed to a variety of books by reading novels in a group setting. At times, these novels will be assigned, other times students shall have a choice. Among the novels to be used are Beetles Lightly Toasted (Naylor, 1987), The Fighting Ground (Avi,1984), Charley Skedaddle (Beatty, 1986), Do Bananas Chew Gum (Gilson, 1980), The Girl With the Silver Eyes (Roberts, 1980), On My Honor (Bauer, 1986), Homer Price (McCloskey, 1943), Shiloh (Naylor, 1991), The Sign of the Beaver (Speare, 1983), The TV Kid (Byars, 1976), The Twits (Dahl, 1980), The War With Grandpa (Smith, 1984), Ben and Me (Lawson, 1939), and Where the Red Fern Grows (Rawls, 1961).

As Manley (1980, p. 554) states, "Children need to develop the habit of reading." With this idea in mind, the researcher will implement the action plan described above.

Methods of Assessment

At the conclusion of this project, the researcher shall evaluate the effects of the action plan. Assessment will be done through the use of teacher records, interviews with students, student records and surveys (Appendix F), and parent surveys (Appendix G).

Chapter 4

PROJECT RESULTS

Historical Description of Intervention

The objective of this project was to increase the amount of recreational reading being done by the targeted fifth graders. In order to accomplish the desired change, motivational reading programs and numerous reading activities were implemented.

The project started the first full week of school, when a letter explaining the project was sent home to parents (Appendix H). Then, students (Appendix A) and parents (Appendices B & C) completed surveys, as mentioned previously in Chapter 2.

Following the analysis of these surveys, the Reading Motivators survey (Appendix I) was prepared and given to the students. The purpose of this survey was threefold:

1). it determined what these students perceived to be very good, average, and very poor rewards for reading (Table 3)

2). it established what activities the teacher might utilize to encourage students to read (Table 4)

3). it indicated what types of activities students preferred engaging in after reading a book (Table 5)

Table 3

Reading Motivators for Fifth Graders

October 1994

(n=27)

Rewards for reading	% Very good reward	% Average reward	% Very poor reward
1. Getting points on computer for books read and tested on	30	70	0
2. Getting extra credit	63	37	0
3. Getting your name on bulletin board	41	41	18
4. Getting free time as reward for extra reading	70	26	4
5. Getting stars on a chart	41	44	15
6. Getting to go to other classes to tell about books you've read	37	33	30
7. Getting excused from other class work as a reward for extra reading	70	19	11
8. Getting money for how much read	74	7	19
9. Getting prizes for how much read	85	15	0
10. Getting a certificate to take home	44	52	4

As Table 3 shows, students strongly supported prizes, money, being excused from other class work, free time, and extra credit as very good rewards for reading. On the other hand, students indicated that getting points on a computer for books read and tested on, having their name placed on the bulletin board, getting stars on a chart, and receiving a certificate were only average rewards.

Table 4

Teacher Activities to Motivate Reading

October 1994

(n=27)

Things teacher can do to encourage reading	% Would encourage me to read	% Would probably encourage me to read	% Would not encourage me to read
1. Read the first few pages of a book	33	52	15
2. Tell about the places the stories take place	15	52	33
3. Tell about books he has read	26	59	15
4. Give written questions to answer while reading a book	15	37	48
5. Read a book to the class a chapter a day	59	37	4
6. Take the class to the school library	63	37	0
7. Tell about the lives of authors	19	48	33
8. Explain some of the hard words in a book before reading the story	8	59	33

The percentages shown in Table 4 reflect student responses on the topic of what teachers could do to encourage reading. Every student indicated taking the class to the school library would encourage or probably encourage them to read. In addition, 96 percent felt that reading a book to the class, a chapter per day, would or probably would encourage them to read. The students expressed that being given written questions to answer about the book would not encourage them to read.

Table 5

Student Activities After Reading

October 1994

(n=27)

Things you can do after reading	% I'd like to do this	% I'm not sure if I'd like to	% I'm sure I wouldn't like to
1. Take a written test	15	44	41
2. Take a test on a computer	63	29	8
3. Write a book report	26	41	33
4. See a movie or play about the book	74	15	8
5. Meet the author of a story or book	93	7	0
6. Listen to a recording of an author reading his own story or poems	37	52	11
7. Do a crossword puzzle with some of the new words in a story or book	44	30	26
8. Give an oral report on a book you've read	15	33	52
9. Look at pictures of the people you've read about	56	37	7

When responding to the question what type of activities would you like to do after reading a book, 93 percent of the students felt they would like to meet the author, while 74 percent wanted to see a movie or play about the book, and 63 percent expressed a desire to take a test on the computer (Table 5). After reading is completed, the majority of the students, 52 percent, were not sure they would like to listen to a recording of an author reading his own story or poem, 44 percent were not sure they would like to take a written test on a book they had read, and 41 percent were not certain they would like to write a book report. In addition, 52 percent of the students were sure they would not like to give an oral report on a book, while 41 percent would not like to take a written test, and 33 percent would not like to write a book report.

Following the Action Plan of Chapter 3, the instructor exposed the students to a variety of literature by reading aloud to the class. This occurred for 15-20 minutes per day, four to five days each week. The read aloud selections included novels such as The Island of the Blue Dolphins by O'Dell (1960), The Dollhouse Murders by Wright (1983), and The Witch of Blackbird Pond by Speare (1958). Each of these novels took four to five weeks to complete. While the instructor read the book aloud, the students discussed the plot and characters and were engaged in activities from District U-46's (1988) Celebrate Literature series for fifth grade. When each book was concluded, each student was asked to complete a Book Evaluation Form (Appendix J) and given an opportunity to take an accelerated reader test on the book. While the original plan

called for a different novel monthly, The Best Christmas Pageant Ever by Robinson (1972) was eliminated due to the length of the previous novels.

In addition to the read aloud books, excerpts from many other novels and poetry books were read to arouse the students' interest in reading. These excerpts were frequently chosen according to whom the author of the month was, although additional excerpts from other authors were also selected, such as The Night of the Twisters by Ruckman (1984). Furthermore, three guest readers visited the class to share favorite readings and stories. For example, Leona Rusch, children's librarian at Bartlett Public Library, read to the students for 20 minutes. On another occasion, principal Mark DeMoulin read to students in his office.

Three motivational reading programs were used during the project. The Accelerated Reader (Advantage Learning Systems, 1992) was conducted for two nine-week periods. The first was from late August through the end of October; the second ran from November 1st to January 13th. A third period began on January 16th and would expire on March 24th. Since each book had a predetermined point value based on length and reading difficulty, students earned points based on the results of their test each time. The instructor made modifications for this program. First, students received a free assignment coupon for every 10 points earned. Second, for any book read that was not on the Accelerated Reader (Advantage Learning Systems, 1992) program, a student earned points for writing a 10 question, multiple choice test approved by the

instructor or by completing one or more activities from the Book Activities list (Appendix K).

The Four in a Row Reading (Appendix D) also was conducted for two nine-week periods, the first beginning in August and the second on November 1st. Students had the opportunity of earning awards in this program, selected by the class, for each four in a row that was completed on their sheet. Finally, the Pizza Hut Book-It program (Appendix E) ran from October through February. Each month a student reached his/her goal for number of pages read, a coupon for a Pizza Hut pizza was awarded.

In an effort to provide encouragement, a minimum 15 minute silent reading period was established four days a week. This allowed the students time to read an item of interest, and assisted them in attaining goals. It also gave the instructor the opportunity to be a model of reading.

Many other ideas from the Action Plan were also used to encourage the fifth grade students to increase their recreational reading. First, videos of Island of the Blue Dolphins by O'Dell (1960) and Where the Red Fern Grows by Rawls (1961) were shown after reading was completed. Author/illustrator Steven Kellogg (1993) was seen in Trumpet Video Visits, and other authors were heard on tapes. Second, letters were written to favorite authors in January. Third, the fifth graders read with first graders for 20 minutes each Friday morning, from November through January. Fourth, novels were chosen and read in novel groups. The students completed various reading and

writing activities in their groups and filled out a Book Evaluation Form (Appendix J).

Finally, the Horizon School appearances of authors Patricia Reilly Giff and Jamie Gilson and actor James Getty were used to encourage reading. Mrs. Giff talked to the students about her books, reading, and writing. Excerpts from The Gift of the Pirate Queen and Left-Handed Shortstop were read by Mrs. Giff (1982, 1980). Meanwhile, James Getty portrayed Abraham Lincoln at the school. His appearance produced interest in Lincoln and the books Lincoln A Photobiography by Russell Freedman (1987) and Twenty Days by Dorothy Kunhardt (1965). Jamie Gilson's appearance in the spring has been promoted by the instructor with excerpts from Thirteen Ways to Sink a Sub and Hobie Hanson, You're Weird by Gilson (1982,1987).

Presentation and Analysis of Results

In order to assess the effects of the motivational reading programs and intervention activities on fifth grade students' recreational reading habits, the students were given a Post Evaluation survey (Appendix F). In addition, parents were also given a Post Evaluation survey (Appendix G).

The Four in a Row Reading (Appendix D) encouraged some students to read more, especially if they liked the authors used. During the initial nine-week program from late August through October, 13 students earned a free assignment coupon for a four in a row, while three of those students earned a poster for a second four in a row,

and one student a school store certificate for a third four in a row. According to the instructor, the second Four in a Row period (Appendix D), from November through mid-January, did not appear to sustain student enthusiasm or interest as much. Thus, six students received a free assignment coupon, and four of them earned a poster.

Meanwhile, the Accelerated Reader (Advantage Learning Systems, 1992) program increased the amount of recreational reading by many students due to various factors. From August through October, it was required that students take tests on a minimum of three books from the program's extensive list. An extra credit grade of A was given for 20 or more points, and a B for 16-19 points. The result was 135 tests taken and 507 points earned. This computed to five tests and approximately 19 points per person. For the period of November through mid-January, two more incentives were added: a free assignment coupon for every 10 points on the program, and the top 10 individuals would have their names posted. The class ended with 160 tests and 574.6 points, an average of 6 tests and 21.2 points per student. Thirteen students were successful reaching 20 points or more.

The third motivational reading program, Pizza Hut's Book-It (Appendix E) offered a free individual pizza to each student that reached a predetermined goal in terms of number of pages to be read that month. Together, the student and teacher agreed upon the goal. Results varied during the five month program, with 15 to 20 students reaching their goal each month.

Table 6

Student Survey - Post Evaluation

March 1995

(n=27)

	March %	August %
Enjoyment of recreational reading		
a. Not at all	0	4
b. Some	11	26
c. Quite a bit	33	37
d. Greatly	56	33
Like having time to read at school		
a. Not at all	0	0
b. Some	8	22
c. Quite a bit	29	40
d. Greatly	63	37
Time spent reading at home daily		
a. None	4	8
b. 5-10 minutes	15	15
c. 10-20 minutes	11	22
d. 20-30 minutes	33	26
e. More than 30 minutes	37	29
Amount of reading now compared to September		
a. Less	0	
b. Same	11	
c. A little more	47	
d. Much more	40	
Like parent to read to you		
a. Not at all	33	33
b. Some	37	40
c. Quite a bit	4	11
d. Very much	15	8
Parents read to child		
a. Yes	30	67
b. No	70	33
Favorite author		
a. Yes	78	56
b. No	22	30
Like teacher to read to class		
a. None	4	0
b. Some	22	44
c. Quite a bit	26	18
d. Very much	47	37
Frequency of library visit		
a. Seldom	18	8
b. Once a month (occasionally)	15	44
c. Weekly	56	40
d. Research only	11	8
Favorite book		
a. Yes	44	
b. No	56	

Table 6 (continued)

	March %	August %
Types of books/stories like to read		
a. Humorous	82	
b. Adventure	74	
c. Mystery	89	
d. Poetry	11	
e. Sports	33	
f. Science fiction	37	
g. History	18	
h. Biographies	22	
i. Horror	63	
j. Picture books	22	
Motivators for reading		
a. Accelerated Reader	74	
b. Four in a Row	44	
c. Going to the library	33	
d. Teacher reading to class	53	
e. Knowledge	18	
f. Watching movie/video based on a book	44	
g. Other students tell about books	59	
h. Extra credit	41	
i. Awards	44	
j. Guest readers	41	
k. Visiting authors	37	
l. It's fun	89	
m. Reading novels in school	44	
n. Parents reading to me	4	
Choice		
a. Read	22	47
Watch TV	78	53
b. Read	39	44
Use a computer	61	56
c. Read	67	74
Play video games	33	26
d. Read	36	29
Play sports	64	71
e. Read	22	
Go to a movie	78	
Number of books read from October-February		
a. 0-10	8	
b. 11-15	53	
c. 16-40	33	
d. More than 40	8	

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The results of the students post-evaluation survey (Appendix F) are shown in Table 6. In addition, comparisons are made to the findings on the August survey by the column on the right. Thus, the table is including percentages on those items which appeared on both surveys. For example, in the August survey (Appendix A), 26 percent of the students enjoyed recreational reading some, 37 percent quite a bit, and 33 percent greatly. The March survey (Appendix F) indicates 11 percent of the students enjoyed recreational reading some, 33 percent quite a bit, and 56 percent greatly. This is a very positive indicator that these fifth grade students are reading more. Also, Table 6 shows that in August, 22 percent liked having time to read at school some, 40 percent quite a bit, and 37 percent greatly. These figures compare with 8 percent responding some, 29 percent quite a bit, and 63 percent greatly in the March survey. While the fifth graders have changed their feelings only slightly toward liking parents reading to them, when asked if they liked the teacher reading to the class, the findings were significant. Initially, 44 percent said some, 18 percent quite a bit and 37 percent very much. The latest survey revealed 26 percent responded none or some, 26 percent quite a bit, and 47 percent very much.

The Student Post-Evaluation Survey (Appendix F) also revealed that an overwhelming majority of the students (88 percent) are reading more now compared to September, with 41 percent reading much more. That may help explain why a) 78 percent have a favorite author compared to 56 percent previously, and b) 44 percent

have a favorite book and 56 percent do not.

Students enjoyed reading many types of books. While it was not surprising that mystery, humor, and adventure would be the most popular, this researcher was surprised that only 11 percent selected poetry, especially with the appeal of books such as The New Kid on the Block by Jack Prelutsky (1984) and Where the Sidewalk Ends by Shel Silverstein (1974).

There were many different motivators which encouraged these students to read. The Accelerated Reader (Advantage Learning Systems, 1992) was a high motivator, especially for some students when extra credit or a free assignment coupon was offered. Other students telling about books or sharing their thoughts on Book Evaluation Forms (Appendix J) was helpful. For example, one student referred to All About Sam by Lowry (1988) as being funny and entertaining. He also said it was neat hearing about a baby's point of view. Another student said she liked that the wording was what Sam was thinking or trying to say, and sometimes the book would make her laugh so hard. A third student read the sequel Attaboy, Sam by Lowry (1992). He rated the book excellent and told the class the book kept him reading, even at home. He highly recommended the book because it was funny. The Last of the Really Great Whangdoodles by Julie Edwards (1974) was recommended for those who like to dream and have adventures. Comments of this type encouraged other students to read these books also. Other books which became quite popular and well read included Wait Till

Helen Comes by Mary Downing Hahn (1986), The Cay by Theodore Taylor (1969), Shoebag by Mary James (1990), and Journey to America by Sonia Levitin (1970).

Major factors in encouraging the students to do more recreational reading were the teacher reading to the class and the silent reading period that was provided. The prime contribution of the teacher's reading was the exposure of a wide variety of literature given to the students; it was not the reading of entire novels, but the excerpts from many different books - just enough to hook the students' interest or whet their desire for these books. For example, a short excerpt from Hobie Hanson, You're Weird by Gilson (1987) brought immediate interest, as did showing the illustrations from The Eleventh Hour and The Sign of the Seahorse by Graeme Base (1988, 1992).

Finally, the most significant motivator for reading, according to these students as a group, is that reading is fun.

Table 7

Parent Survey

March 1995

(n=27)

	March %	August %
Child enjoys reading recreationally		
a. Not at all	8	
b. Some	23	
c. Quite a bit	27	
d. Very much	42	
Child reads at home daily		
a. None	8	11
b. 5-10 minutes	8	18
c. 10-20 minutes	16	15
d. 20-30 minutes	20	22
e. More than 30 minutes	48	33
Child reads at home weekly		
a. None	4	11
b. 1 hour	12	15
c. 2-3 hours	27	26
d. 4-5 hours	27	37
e. More than 5 hours	27	11
Read to your child		
a. Yes	31	44
b. No	69	56
Frequency of reading		
a. None	69	60
b. Once a seek	15	18
c. 2-3 times a week	12	11
d. Daily	4	11
Amount of TV child watches daily		
a. None	0	0
b. 0-1 hour	31	26
c. 1-3 hours	46	59
d. More than 3 hours	23	8

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Table 7 (continued)

Child has increased amount of recreational reading	
a. Not at all	8
b. Slightly	31
c. Quite a bit	31
d. Very much	27
Child's attitude has improved toward reading	
a. Not at all	8
b. Slightly	34
c. Quite a bit	27
d. Very much	31
Child's attitude towards books	
a. No interest	8
b. Some interest	15
c. Interest	19
d. Great interest	58
Motivators that contribute to child's recreational reading	
a. Accelerated Reader	81
b. Four in a Row	23
c. Going to library	50
d. Teacher reading to class	58
e. Reading novels	54
f. Reading to younger children	46
g. Awards	65
h. Book-It	58
i. Visiting authors	42
j. Guest readers	31
k. Knowledge	46
l. It's fun	77

Activities child spends most time doing (1 being highest)	1	2	3	4	5
a. Playing (free time)	50	15	27	4	4
b. Reading	19	31	23	12	15
c. Watching TV	15	23	23	27	8
d. Sports	4	27	19	23	27
e. Other programs or activities	12	8	8	27	37

Table 7 provides results of the Parent Post-Evaluation Survey (Appendix G). In addition, it also gives a comparison on some items with the original Parent Survey (Appendices B & C) in August. According to parents, the fifth graders increased their daily reading at home from September to March. The percentage of students not reading at all or 5-10 minutes decreased, while those reading more than 30 minutes daily increased. Furthermore, the amount of time spent reading at home weekly also showed a similar trend, with the percent of students reading none or one hour decreasing, and the percentage reading more than five hours per week increasing. The Parent Post-Evaluation Survey (Appendix G) and Table 7 also revealed the percentage of parents reading to their fifth graders dropped from 44 percent to 31 percent.

From looking at the information given by the Parent Post-Evaluation Survey (Appendix G), parents have confirmed 69 percent of the students enjoy reading recreationally, although these figures are different than those received by the students and shown in Table 6. In addition, while a gain was shown in the amount of reading done at home, there also was more television being watched. The percentage of students watching one to three hours of television dropped considerably; however, the percentage of students watching more than three hours also rose considerably. Of special interest in this project, parents reported a substantial increase in the amount of recreational reading being done by these students - 31 percent have increased their reading quite a bit and 27 percent very much. Moreover, attitudes had improved toward reading quite

a bit for 27 percent and very much by 31 percent. Nineteen percent of these fifth graders had interest in books, while 58 percent showed great interest.

Finally, parents expressed similar sentiments as their children that many different motivators contributed to the recreational reading done by these Horizon fifth graders. Accelerated Reader (Advanced Learning Systems, 1992) was mentioned by 81 percent of the parents, 77 percent indicated reading was fun for their child, and 65 percent identified rewards. Parents also felt knowledge was much more of a motivator than the students indicated and did not believe Four in a Row, at 23 percent, was as much of a motivator as the 44 percent student response.

From the evidence presented in Tables 6 and 7, the intervention appears to have had a positive effect on students spending more time doing recreational reading. Both students and parents have indicated this to be true. Furthermore, parents felt many of their children had an improved attitude toward reading and greater interest in books. Finally, both the fifth grade students and their parents believed many different motivators contributed to these results.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the presentation and analysis of the data on recreational reading, the students showed a significant increase in the amount of recreational reading they are engaged in. The solution strategy that was presented in Chapter 3 appears to have been

very effective in these fifth graders reading more than they did previously. Students and parents both indicated a high percentage of the children were reading more. This is a result of the teacher reading to the class - novels and excerpts - and exposing them to a wide variety of literature. The students enjoyed having the teacher read to the class, and have done more reading because it's fun, not work. A silent reading period provided time to encourage reading. Furthermore, guest readers and visiting authors helped arouse interest, as did motivational reading programs, awards, and various other incentives. While these motivators do not guarantee that this group of fifth graders will become lifelong readers, building interest and getting students on the reading path is a good start. Moreover, although survey results show that a majority of students would still prefer watching television, using a computer, going to a movie, or playing sports before reading, at least there is evidence that fifth graders do enjoy reading and will read. Sometimes, it just requires giving them assistance and encouragement to read.

Based upon the findings of this project, this researcher has several recommendations. First, since students have other activities to attract their attention, the teacher must expose children to a wide variety of literature by reading to the students 15-20 minutes daily. The selections read should be a mixture of novels, excerpts, and poetry. In addition, familiarize students with many authors by highlighting different authors each month. Most importantly, instill the idea that reading is fun!

Second, the teacher should provide a period of 15-20 minutes daily for students to read. During this time, the teacher needs to read also, thereby modeling for the students that reading is important and enjoyable.

Third, the use of motivational reading programs may serve to encourage students to increase their reading. In addition, incentives that are built in will give added motivation. For example, the Accelerated Reader (Advantage Learning Systems, 1992) provided incentive for some students in the present study. However, when new awards were offered, the amount of reading increased significantly. Meanwhile, the Four in a Row Program (Appendix D) brought mixed results. This program's success was heavily dependent upon the authors used and whether the awards offered were attractive to the students. The selection of incentive awards can be more effective when a) students help decide what the incentives will be, and b) if ideas are received from a source such as the Reading Motivators Survey (Appendix I).

Fourth, students should frequently share what they have read, either by giving book talks in small groups or writing their thoughts on Book Evaluation Forms (Appendix J). In this way, other students find out about authors with whom they may not have been familiar. For example, Mary Downing Hahn (1986, 1991) books, such as Wait Till Helen Comes and The Spanish Kidnapping Disaster, became very popular through student book talks, whereas at the beginning of the project, she and her works were virtually unknown.

Fifth, the researcher believes guest readers can also be used to encourage students to read. They provide additional adult role models to emphasize or demonstrate that reading is both important and fun.

Finally, this researcher advocates inviting an author to speak to the students. In this case, they read in anticipation of author Jamie Gilson's appearance. When she appears, they will experience the author talking about reading and writing, and will gain an understanding of how books evolve. (This researcher has previously witnessed the enthusiasm students demonstrated to read the author's works after an appearance.)

In conclusion, when considering this topic for future study or inquiry, modifications should be made. For example, additional provisions need to be made or considered for readers of low ability. In such cases, these students might be encouraged to read even more if the standards on motivational reading programs were more within their reach. Furthermore, they have a very difficult time experiencing success or enjoying reading if suitable material is not available in the classroom. Finally, these readers also require assistance in selecting material that will be appropriate and at the same time have appeal. Be sure to help these students so they not only believe recreational reading is fun, but also experience it!

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Appendices

Appendix A

STUDENT READING SURVEY

1. How much do you enjoy reading for fun?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

2. How much do you like having time to read at school?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

3. Do you like to read at home?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

4. Do you like your parents to read to you?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

5. How often do your parents read to you?

   NOT AT ALL ONCE IN A WHILE FREQUENTLY

6. How much do you like your teacher to read to the class?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

7. How much time do you spend reading at home daily?

   NONE 5-10 MIN. 10-20 MIN. 20-30 MIN. MORE THAN 30 MIN.

8. Do you have a favorite author? YES NO

   If yes, who is it?

   _____

9. What types of books or stories do you like to read?

   _____

   _____

10. Other than books, what else do you enjoy reading?

    _____

    _____

11. Do you have a library card? YES NO

12. How often do you visit the library?

    SELDOM OCCASIONALLY WEEKLY ONLY FOR RESEARCH

13. What books have you reread? Why?

    _____

    _____

    _____

14. Are you participating in any activities or programs, such as sports, music, etc.

A. YES NO

B. If yes, what are they?

_____

_____

15. Please number the following activities according to which you spend the most time. (#1 is the highest)

_____ WATCHING TELEVISION _____ READING

_____ USING THE COMPUTER _____ PLAYING SPORTS

_____ PLAYING VIDEO GAMES _____ WATCHING VIDEOS

16. Given a choice, would you rather

A) read or watch television?

B) read or use a computer?

C) read or play a video games?

D) read or play sports?

E) read or go to a movie?

F) read or listen to music?

17. Is it important to learn to read? YES NO

Why? _____

18. Do you have a special place in which to read at home? YES NO

19. Which of the following items could you find in your home?

____ daily newspaper ____ atlas

____ magazines ____ almanac

____ dictionary ____ thesaurus

____ encyclopedia ____ your own library

20. Which of the following do you have in your home?

CD player cassette player computer

video games laser discs VCR

21. A. Does one or both of your parents work?

NEITHER MOTHER FATHER

B. What hours does your mother/father work?

MOTHER _____

FATHER _____

Appendix B

PARENT READING SURVEY # 1

1. How important is reading from your viewpoint?

1 2 3 4 5

not important important great importance

2. Do you read to your child? Yes No

A. If yes, how often? (Circle one)

once a week 2-3 times a week daily

B. How long does the reading occur? (Circle one)

5-10 minutes 10-20 minutes more than 20 minutes

3. Does your child have a library card for the public library?

Yes No

If yes, which library? _____

4. How often does your child visit the library? (Circle one)

seldom once a month weekly research only

5. A. How much time does your child read at home daily?

none 5-10 min. 10-20 min. 20-30 min. more than 30 min.

B. How much time does your child read at home weekly?

none 1 hour 2-3 hours 4-5 hours more than 5 hours

6. Which of these activities does your child spend the most time doing? (Number 1-5 with #1 being most frequent)

_____ watching television

_____ playing video games

_____ using the computer

_____ reading

_____ watching movies/videos

7. Which of these items do you have in your home? (Check all that apply)

_____ daily newspaper

_____ weekly magazine

_____ dictionary

_____ encyclopedia

_____ atlas

_____ almanac

_____ thesaurus

Appendix C

PARENT SURVEY # 2

1. A. Which of these activities does your child spend the most time doing? (1 being most frequent)

_____ playing (free time) _____ watching television

_____ reading _____ in other organized activities

B. If your child is involved in other organized activities, what are they?

_____

_____

2. How much television does your child watch daily?

none 0-1 hour 1-3 hours more than 3 hours

3. What is the educational background of

A. Father High School College Graduate School

B. Mother High School College Graduate School

4. Favorite leisure activities (1 is highest)

A. Father

_____ watch television _____ participate in sports

_____ read _____ other _____

B. Mother

_____ watch television _____ participate in sports

_____ read _____ other _____

5. What is read by parents? (check those that apply)

A. Father

_____ newspapers _____ novels _____ magazines

_____work related material

B. Mother

_____ newspapers _____ novels _____ magazines

_____ work related material

Appendix D

Four in a Row Reading

August 29, 1994

Dear Parents,

Today your child is beginning a project - Four in a Row Reading. I want to encourage reading of a variety of authors during this nine weeks. I have given each student a Four in a Row Reading activity sheet with 16 squares. After your child has read a book, initial the appropriate box. After you have verified four in a row, your child can collect the appropriate award.

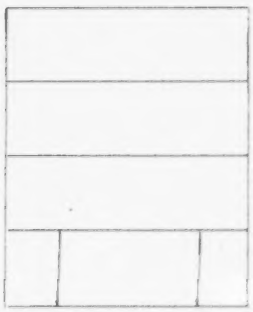
It is essential, though, that your child really does read the books, since that is the way to develop the reading habit and a positive attitude toward reading. I am asking for your help to monitor the reading level of materials. However, it is more important that your child enjoys the experience of reading.

If you have any questions, please ask. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Mr. Lange

Author



Write name of the book and the number of pages.

Parent's initials

Teacher's initials

1st Four in a Row - a free assignment

2nd Four in a Row - a book club poster

3rd Four in a Row - a school store certificate

4th Four in a Row - a book from a book club

Parent Verification - Signature - Date

1st Four in a Row - _____

2nd Four in a Row - _____

3rd Four in a Row - _____

4th Four in a Row - _____

Full Card - _____

Name_____

FOUR IN A ROW READING - AUTHORS

Betsy Byars	Eth Clifford	Judy Blume	Free Choice
Beverly Cleary	Jamie Gilson	Robert K. Smith	Lois Lowry
Free Choice	Free Choice	Roald Dahl	Stephen Kellogg
James Howe	Phyllis Naylor	Free Choice	Johanna Hurwitz

Choices

Lynne R. Banks	Mary D. Hahn	Louis Sachar	E.B. White
Bruce Coville	Gary Paulsen	George Selden	L.I. Wilder
Jean Fritz	Jack Prelutsky	Gertrude Warner	B.R. Wright

Name_____

FOUR IN A ROW READING - AUTHORS

Jean Fritz	Fiction	Bruce Coville	Free Choice
Free Choice	Roald Dahl	Elizabeth Speare	Nonfiction
Phyllis Naylor	Johanna Hurwitz	Newbery Winner	Jamie Gilson
Betsy Byars	Free Choice	Robert Lawson	Patricia Giff

Choices

Avi	Beverly Cleary	Marguerite Henry	Robert Peck
Bill Brittain	Jean George	Gordan Korman	Mark Twain
Lynne R. Banks	Mary D. Hahn	Katherine Paterson	Betty R. Wright

Name_____

FOUR IN A ROW READING - AUTHORS

Betsy Byars	Eth Clifford	Judy Blume	Lynne R. Banks
Beverly Cleary	Jamie Gilson	Robert K. Smith	Lois Lowry
Louis Sachar	Betty R. Wright	Roald Dahl	Stephen Kellogg
James Howe	Phyllis Naylor	Jean Fritz	Johanna Hurwitz

Appendix E

THE BOOK IT!
NATIONAL READING INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Dear Parents, Guardians or Caregivers:

We're pleased to inform you that your child's class will be participating in the BOOK IT!® National Reading Incentive Program. Sponsored by Pizza Hut, the program motivates children to read more, and helps pre-readers develop a positive attitude toward learning to read, with a proven combination of incentives – pizza, praise, and recognition.

Because the program is most successful for children whose parents actively participate, we would like you to know how it works:

- The teacher sets monthly reading goals for each child in the class.
- When a reading goal is met, the teacher gives the child a Pizza Award Certificate.
- The child can redeem this certificate for a *FREE, ONE-TOPPING PERSONAL PAN PIZZA*® at any participating Pizza Hut® restaurant during normal business hours, seven days a week.
- On the first visit, the restaurant manager gives the child a *BUTTON* and a *RECOGNITION STICKER* to place on the button. The child receives another pizza, along with a sticker, on each subsequent visit.
- The Pizza Award Certificate is valid only when the child is present. This gives the restaurant manager and crew an opportunity to praise and congratulate the child, which is an important part of the program incentive.
- If a child meets the reading goals all five months of the program, his or her name will be placed on the *BOOK IT! READER'S HONOR ROLL*, a classroom record of student achievement.
- If all children meet their reading goals in any four of the five months of the program, the entire class and the teacher are given a *FREE PIZZA PARTY*. The party is available for children in *all* grades, K-6.

The 1994-95 school year marks the 10th birthday of BOOK IT! To celebrate this milestone, we've developed a number of activities and program enhancements to make BOOK IT! better than ever. We hope you'll join in our celebration of reading by supporting and encouraging your child's reading achievements.

Sincerely,

Eunice Ellis

Eunice Ellis, Director
The BOOK IT! Program

The BOOK IT!® National Reading Incentive Program is sponsored by Pizza Hut, Inc. Address: The BOOK IT! Program, P.O. Box 2999, Wichita, KS 67201. Telephone: 1-800-1-BOOK-IT (1-800-426-6548). BOOK IT! and Personal Pan Pizza are registered trademarks of Pizza Hut, Inc. ©1994 Pizza Hut, Inc.

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PARENT READING VERIFICATION FORM

Please fill out a verification slip each time your child has completed a reading assignment for the BOOK IT!® program. Return the slip to your child's teacher.

I VERIFY THAT _____ READ _____
(Name of Child) *(Title of Book or Reading Assignment)*

BY _____ SIGNED _____ DATE _____
(Name of Author) *(Signature of Parent)*

I VERIFY THAT _____ READ _____
(Name of Child) *(Title of Book or Reading Assignment)*

BY _____ SIGNED _____ DATE _____
(Name of Author) *(Signature of Parent)*

I VERIFY THAT _____ READ _____
(Name of Child) *(Title of Book or Reading Assignment)*

BY _____ SIGNED _____ DATE _____
(Name of Author) *(Signature of Parent)*

I VERIFY THAT _____ READ _____
(Name of Child) *(Title of Book or Reading Assignment)*

BY _____ SIGNED _____ DATE _____
(Name of Author) *(Signature of Parent)*

I VERIFY THAT _____ READ _____
(Name of Child) *(Title of Book or Reading Assignment)*

BY _____ SIGNED _____ DATE _____
(Name of Author) *(Signature of Parent)*

I VERIFY THAT _____ READ _____
(Name of Child) *(Title of Book or Reading Assignment)*

BY _____ SIGNED _____ DATE _____
(Name of Author) *(Signature of Parent)*

The BOOK IT! National Reading Incentive Program

The BOOK IT!® National Reading Incentive Program is sponsored by Pizza Hut, Inc. Address: The BOOK IT! Program, P.O. Box 2999, Wichita, KS 67201. Telephone 1-800-4-BOOK-IT (1-800-426-6548). BOOK IT! and Personal Pan Pizza are registered trademarks of Pizza Hut, Inc. ©1994 Pizza Hut, Inc.

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Appendix F

STUDENT SURVEY - POST EVALUATION

1. How much do you enjoy reading for fun?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

2. How much do you like having time to read at school?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

3. Do you like to read at home?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

4. How much time do you spend reading at home daily?

   NONE 5-10 MIN. 10-20 MIN. 20-30 MIN. MORE THAN 30 MIN.

5. How much are you reading now compared to September?

   LESS SAME A LITTLE MORE MUCH MORE

6. Do you like your parents to read to you?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

7. Does your mother/father read to you? YES NO

8. How much do you like your teacher to read to the class?

   NONE SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

9. How often do you visit the library?

   SELDOM ONCE A MONTH WEEKLY ONLY FOR RESEARCH

10. Do you have a favorite author? YES NO

If yes, who is it?_____

11. What types of book/stories do you like to read?

____HUMOROUS	____SCIENCE FICTION
____ADVENTURE	____HISTORY
____SPORTS	____BIOGRAPHIES
____MYSTERY (SUSPENSE)	____HORROR
____POETRY	____PICTURE BOOKS

12. Do you have a favorite book? YES NO

What is it, and why?_____

_____

13. Are you reading more now than when this project started?
YES NO

14. What motivates you to read?

____ACCELERATED READER PROGRAM	____EXTRA CREDIT
____FOUR IN A ROW READING	____AWARDS
____GOING TO THE LIBRARY	____GUEST READERS
____MY TEACHER READING TO CLASS	____VISITING AUTHORS
____THE KNOWLEDGE BOOKS GIVE ME	____IT'S FUN
____WATCHING A MOVIE/VIDEO BASED ON A BOOK	____READING NOVELS IN SCHOOL
____LISTENING TO OTHER STUDENTS TALK ABOUT BOOKS	____MY PARENT READING TO ME
____OTHER	

15. How many books have your read from October through February?

    0-10 11-25 26-40 41-50 MORE THAN 50

16. Please number the following activities according to which you spend the most time. (1 being the most)

    ____WATCHING TELEVISION ____READING

    ____PLAYING VIDEO GAMES ____WATCHING MOVIES/VIDEOS

    ____PLAYING SPORTS ____LISTENING TO MUSIC

17. Given a choice, would you rather (Circle appropriate answer)

    A. READ OR WATCH TELEVISION

    B. READ OR USE A COMPUTER

    C. READ OR GO TO A MOVIE

    D. READ OR PLAY VIDEO GAMES

    E. READ OR PLAY SPORTS

    F. READ OR LISTEN TO MUSIC

18. What are your feelings toward reading?

    Reading is

    A. BORING B. EXCITING C. FUN

    D. YUK E. EASY F. DIFFICULT

Appendix G

PARENT SURVEY - POST EVALUATION

1. Does your child enjoy reading recreationally?

   NOT AT ALL SOME QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

2. A. How much time does your child spend reading at home daily?

   NONE 5-10 MIN. 10-20 MIN. 20-30 MIN. MORE THAN 30 MIN.

   B. How much time does your child spend reading at home weekly?

   NONE 1 HOUR 2-3 HOURS 4-5 HOURS MORE THAN 5 HOURS

3. Do you read to your child? YES NO

   A. If yes, how often? (Circle one)

   ONCE A WEEK 2-3 TIMES A WEEK DAILY

   B. How long do you read to your child? (Circle one)

   5-10 MIN. 10-20 MIN. MORE THAN 20 MIN.

4. How often does your child visit the library? (Circle one)

   SELDOM ONCE A MONTH WEEKLY ONLY FOR RESEARCH

5. How much television does your child watch daily?

   NONE 0-1 HOUR 1-3 HOURS MORE THAN 3 HOURS

6. Which of these activities does your child spend the most time doing? (Number 1-5 with 1 being the highest)

____PLAYING (FREE TIME) ____WATCHING TELEVISION

____READING ____SPORTS

____OTHER ORGANIZED PROGRAMS/ACTIVITIES

7. Has your child increased the amount of recreational reading he/she does?

NOT AT ALL SLIGHTLY QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

8. Has your child's attitude toward recreational reading improved/changed.

NOT AT ALL SLIGHTLY QUITE A BIT VERY MUCH

9. What is your child's attitude toward books?

NO INTEREST SOME INTEREST INTEREST GREAT INTEREST

10. Which of these motivators do you feel/believe contributes to the recreational reading your child does? (Check all that apply)

____ACCELERATED READER ____AWARDS

____FOUR IN A ROW READING ____BOOK-IT

____GOING TO THE LIBRARY ____VISITING AUTHORS

____TEACHER READING TO CLASS ____GUEST READERS

____READING NOVELS IN SCHOOL ____KNOWLEDGE GAINED

____READING TO PRIMARY CHILDREN ____IT'S FUN

Appendix H

Parent Letter

August 29, 1994

Dear Parents,

Throughout this 1994-1995 school year, I will be involved in a graduate program at St. Xavier University. As part of my study, I shall be conducting research on the topic of recreational reading. The students will complete a survey, as will parents, to help in gathering useful information for my research. There will be no identification of any individual student or parent in my research project. Thus, information received will be used anonymously.

The focus of my research project is to improve the interest in and amount of recreational reading done by my students. Therefore, I will be implementing numerous activities to encourage your child to read. Your help and assistance will be greatly appreciated!

The first activity which will be introduced to the class is "Four in a Row Reading." This is an incentive project that enables students to receive awards for each four in a row on their chart. At the same time, students will also be earning points on the computerized accelerated reading program and participating in the Pizza Hut Book-It program. Most books read will count toward at least two of these projects simultaneously.

Second, I will be reading aloud to the class regularly. My reading will include novels, excerpts from books, poetry, and easy books.

Third, guest authors Patricia Reilly Giff and Jamie Gilson shall speak to the children about books and reading. In addition, other classroom visitors will share stories and read aloud.

Fourth, students will be involved in various activities related to their books. Included among these activities are book talks, character portrayals, writing letters about the book, and making posters as advertisements.

Finally, I encourage you to join in by reading to and with your child and share the adventure of books! Together, let's help this year's fifth grade students increase the amount of recreational reading they are currently doing.

Thank you for your help and support! If you have any questions concerning my research project or procedures, please call me at Horizon School at 213-5570.

Sincerely,

Mr. Lange

Appendix I

READING MOTIVATORS

A. Rewards

Check the type of reward each of these would be for reading.

	Very Good Reward	Average Reward	Very Poor Reward
1. Getting points on the computer for books read and tested on	_____	_____	_____
2. Getting extra credit	_____	_____	_____
3. Getting your name on a bulletin board	_____	_____	_____
4. Getting free time in school as a reward for extra reading	_____	_____	_____
5. Getting stars on a chart	_____	_____	_____
6. Getting to go to other classes about books you've read	_____	_____	_____
7. Getting excused from other class work as a reward for extra reading	_____	_____	_____
8. Getting money for how much you read	_____	_____	_____

	Very Good Reward	Average Reward	Very Poor Reward
9. Getting prizes for how much you read	_____	_____	_____
10. Getting a certificate to take home for extra reading done	_____	_____	_____

B. Things teachers do to encourage reading

	This would encourage me to read	This would probably encourage me to read	This would not encourage me to read
1. Having a teacher read to the class the first few pages of books that you can then check out if you want to	_____	_____	_____
2. Having the teacher tell about the places where stories in books took place	_____	_____	_____
3. Having the teacher tell about books he or she has read	_____	_____	_____

	This would encourage me to read	This would probably encourage me to read	This would not encourage me to read
4. Having the teacher give you some written questions to answer while you're reading a story or book	_____	_____	_____
5. Having the teacher read a book to the class at a chapter a day	_____	_____	_____
6. Having the teacher take your class to the school library	_____	_____	_____
7. Having the teacher tell you about the lives of authors of books you can read	_____	_____	_____
8. Having the teacher explain some of the hard words in a book before you read it	_____	_____	_____

C. Things to do after reading

	I'd like to do this	Not sure I'd like to do this	I would not like to do this
1. Take a written test on how well you understood a story	_____	_____	_____
2. Take a test on the computer on a book you've read	_____	_____	_____
3. Write a book report about a book you've read	_____	_____	_____
4. Go to a movie or play about a book you've read	_____	_____	_____
5. Meet the author of a book you've read	_____	_____	_____
6. Listen to a record of an author reading his or her own story	_____	_____	_____
7. Do a crossword puzzle with some of the new words in a book you've read	_____	_____	_____
8. Give an oral report on a book you've read	_____	_____	_____
9. Look at pictures of the people you've read about in stories or books	_____	_____	_____

Appendix J

BOOK EVALUATION FORM

Name_____

Title of book_____

Author_____

Type of book_____pages_____

1. How do you rate this book?

1	2	3	4	5
Boring	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent

2. What did you like about this book? Why?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. What did you not like about this book? Why?

4. Would you recommend this book to others? Why?

Appendix K

Book Activities

1. Act out a part from your favorite book.
2. Make a book cover for your book.
3. Make a poster to advertise the book.
4. Make puppets for two characters in the book and have a puppet show.
5. Make a costume like your favorite character in the book.
6. Write or tell a different ending to the book.
7. Read the best part of the book to the class.
8. Make a list of words from your book and draw a picture for each one.
9. Write a letter recommending the book to a friend.
10. Make a clay, soap, or wood model of one of the characters or animals in your book.
11. Make a diorama to show a scene from your book.
12. Make a mural to illustrate scenes from your book.
13. Make a box town like the town or city in your book.
14. Make a recording while your read from your book.
15. Practice reading your book and then you can read to the class or some other class.
16. Make a stuffed character.
17. Make a mobile of characters in your story.
18. Make a jig-saw puzzle of a character or scene in your book.
19. Make a TV series or commercial of your book.

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